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THE INFLUENCE OF THE DARWINIAN THEORY
ON ETHICS.*

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SELDOM has a greater change taken place in the world of thought than that caused by the almost universal acceptance of the Darwinian theory of evolution. The change, which might well be called revolutionary, has been compared to that caused by the substitution of the Copernican for the Ptolemaic theory in astronomy. In every department of scientific activity, the evolution theory may now be said to have become the governing conception of thought. It is true there are important points in the theory on which men of science still differ, but their differences are differences about the method, not about the fact of evolution itself. We think and speak in terms of evolution, and the theory has so far permeated all our thinking that not only biological science, but ethics, economics, and social and political theories and institutions, are beginning to feel the influence of the new ideals and methods of thought which the theory has brought with it. An overwhelming accumulation of facts, drawn from nature and history, has broken down the old conception of things, and has compelled us to adopt new conceptions and adapt our mental and spiritual outlook to the new world of knowledge. It is the object of this paper to emphasize the influence of this great change of thought in so far as it has affected, or is likely to affect, our ethical relationships and outlook.

Fifty years ago, when Darwin's "Origin of Species" was first published, a feeling of indignation and despair passed through certain circles of thought. Many minds were filled with indignation at the thought that the ground

* A paper read before the South African Association for the Advancement of Science.

was so completely cut from under many ancient and cherished theories. Others were in despair in that the very foundations of both religion and ethics seemed to be quaking under their feet. Looking back upon the stormy controversies which followed the publication of that remarkable book, one may well wonder both at the horror-stricken anathemas of theological extremists and the pessimistic forebodings of more thoughtful and charitable minds. We can see now the clear gain which has come to humanity, and how the whole field of ethical study has been enriched by the vast mass of knowledge which Darwin and his fellow-laborers and successors have brought to our minds. Ethical advance has become clearer and surer. Science, which is organized knowledge, has shown itself once more to be the willing servant and helper of humanity. It has shown, quietly, unobtrusively, and even unintentionally, that where any speculative system or theory of life is founded upon error that system or theory is doomed to decay, and deserves its doom.

Much, indeed, of what was thought to be indissolubly bound up with the most cherished convictions of men has, during the past fifty years, gone by the board. The ancient story of the fall of man is now either allegorized, or has given place to the more scientific theory of the gradual ascent of man,—with important consequences to ethical science. In the light of this wider truth, our attitude towards sin and moral evil, and our treatment of them, have undergone great modification. The theory of religious exclusiveness also has had to give way before the study of the religious history of mankind and the wider revelations of truth which comparative religion, the progress of science, and the evolution of the human mind have brought to view, with the result that our ethical relationships and duties towards so-called heathen races have undergone considerable modification. On the other hand, there have been great positive gains. The spiritual and idealistic view of life, so far from quaking under our feet through the discoveries of science, has been based

on stronger foundations than ever. One can hardly realize now the despairing state of mind which, fifty years ago, regarded materialism as triumphant, and looked upon the universe as summed up in the words 'Evolution' and 'Law.' The old mysteries remain. We are as far as ever from knowing the constitution of the atom, or from fathoming the mystery of the Energy which binds its elements together. As ever, we stand in the midst of "an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed." That is the mystery of philosophy, of ethics, and of religion. He would be a bold man who would say that the theory of evolution has solved that mystery or has plucked out its heart. The theory of evolution, valuable as it is, is helpless here. It knows only a succession of phenomena. It simply brings together the objective facts of life and leaves them unrelated to each other by any binding principle of moral intelligence. Idealism furnishes that binding principle. Here, then, is where the spiritual view of life gains its standing-ground, and it is ground which is firm as a rock. Let us see what it builds on this foundation.

Evolution, I have said, gives us a mere succession of phenomena. Ethics and philosophy examine these phenomena and try to appraise their value. They see that the facts or phenomena which science and evolution present to the intelligence of man, are facts which have a varying value, but which, in the changes which they manifest, betoken a definite principle and purpose at work,—a purpose which seems to demand that progress shall proceed from the simple to the complex, that is, from the physical to the psychical and the ethical. These changes are obviously the result of an interpenetrating spirit or principle of life which manifests order, intelligence, and will, for without intelligence there would be no progress. It is idle to assert, as some evolutionists have done, that these increments of spiritual power, rising from the simplest cell to man, have accrued, as it were, out of nothing or merely as the result of the interplay of blind forces.

Out of nothing, nothing can come. The meaning of the universe, or such meaning as we can discern here, must be read, not in the dim beginnings of life, but in its potencies, as manifested in its most highly evolved types. To say that the slowly-evolving increments of consciousness are so infinitesimal that they do not count is to shut one's eyes to the problem. The 'infinite and eternal energy' must at least be equal to its highest product. Dr. Edward Caird puts this point very clearly when he says:

It lies in the very nature of the case that the earliest form of that which lives and develops is the least adequate to its nature, and therefore that from which we can get the least distinct clue to the inner principle of that nature. Hence, to trace a living being back to its beginning, and to explain what follows by such beginning, would be simply to omit almost all that characterizes it, and then to suppose that in what remains we have the secret of its existence. That is not really to explain it, but to explain it away; for on this method we necessarily reduce the features that distinguish it to a *minimum*, and, when we have done so, the remainder may well seem to be itself reducible to something in which the principle in question does not manifest itself at all. If we carry the animal back to protoplasm, it may readily seem possible to explain it as a chemical compound. And, in like manner, by the same minimizing process, we may seem to succeed in reducing consciousness and self-consciousness in its simplest form to sensation, and sensation in its simplest form to something not essentially different from the nutritive life of plants. The fallacy of the *sorites* may thus be used to conceal all *qualitative* changes under the guise of quantitative addition or diminution, and to bridge over all differences by the idea of gradual transition. For, as the old school of etymologists showed, if we are at liberty to interpose as many connecting links as we please, it becomes easy to imagine that things the most heterogeneous should spring out of each other. While, however, the hypothesis of gradual change,—change proceeding by infinitesimal stages which melt into each other so that the eye cannot detect where one begins and the other ends,—makes such a transition easier for the *imagination*, it does nothing to diminish the difficulty or the wonder of it for thought. ("The Evolution of Religion," Vol. I, pp. 49, 50.)

The product of the universe, then, being psychical or ethical, the substratum must surely be psychical or ethical in its nature and purpose. Here we are on the heels of the ancient controversy between ethics and metaphysics, a controversy into which I do not propose to enter. I cannot agree with those who say we must first arrive at some common conclusion with regard to the ultimate

reality of things before we can frame any consistent ethical theory. Our knowledge of that ultimate reality is necessarily fragmentary, partial, inadequate, and therefore provisional, and subject to revision in the light of wider knowledge. Indeed, I think it would be easy to show from history that men's conclusions in regard to that ultimate reality have frequently stood in the way of ethical advance, and have led to conduct which we now condemn as unethical. Life is a warfare. It is dynamic, not static. Every waking moment has its ethical constraints and behests, and the result or outcome of these enters into our estimate of the nature of reality. I have my own view as to the nature of the ultimate reality, but I should not care to say that this particular view is necessary to any fruitful or consistent ethical theory for another man. We must be prepared to recognize temperamental differences in this matter, for our outlook upon the universe is determined largely by our temperament, that is, by our hereditary mental endowment. It will be sufficient for my purpose here if I indicate my standpoint, which, briefly, is this,—that inherent in every form of life, however lowly, there is a desire, a craving, a love for something higher than self. This something in man we may call his moral and affectional nature. Readers of Spencer, Darwin, Wallace, and Drummond will remember that magnificent poem of evolution which science has presented to us in the gradual unfolding of this, the *highest* attribute of life,—how, from the lowliest beginnings and by the smallest increments of power, the seat of consciousness developed, how the cerebrum and the cerebellum grew larger by almost imperceptible degrees, how the gray matter of the brain slowly became more deeply furrowed and of finer quality, how, as the moral and intellectual faculties developed, man began so to order his environment that the environment, in its turn, reacted upon and strengthened that development through family, tribal, national, and racial customs, organizations, and institutions, until this moral and affectional nature arrived

at the stage at which we see it to-day. Out of the deeps that moral nature comes, yet it must first have been in the deeps ere it could arise out of them. Hence the "Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed" must have a nature, a positive character, from which its offspring draw the spiritual material for the warp and woof of life. It cannot be signified or represented by a cipher. It is through evolution that we learn its significance, its character. Evolution gives us the facts, science arranges and classifies them, philosophy and ethics assign to them their value and help us to determine the aim of life accordingly. For life is not a simple series of isolated states, a mere disconnected fragment of nature; it is a complex something bound together by a pervasive intelligence and will, which, as it expresses itself in our individual life, judges, condemns, and approves in accordance with a higher realm of ideas, which look down upon that sense-life which is the channel or instrument through which evolution, in its higher aspect, works. Hence, the fact that man is not a mere fragment of nature, but stands, in his spiritual essence, apart from and above nature, and, while partaking of her life, questions, judges, uses, and at times despairingly condemns her,—this fact, I say, lifts him out of the realm of mere physical cosmic processes, and leagues the highest part of him,—his personality,—with something which is infinite and eternal. It is here that the theory of evolution has so deeply influenced the development of philosophic, ethical, and religious thought. So far from getting rid of the old mysteries it has brought them back in new and more deeply spiritual guise to stimulate the eternal hunger of the soul. Hence the commanding place which the science of ethics occupies in our life and thought, claiming the right to be heard on these supreme questions of life, *e. g.*, the norm or standard of moral judgment, the aim of life, the value of life to the individual, and the relation of the individual to the whole.

If we pass from a consideration of evolution in general

to the methods by which it works and the results which it brings about, we shall see at once how closely bound up its processes are with ethical considerations, and how deeply the theory has influenced modern ethical speculation. Here, again, the whirligig of time has brought about a very definite change in opinion as to what evolution and the struggle for existence implies. It was at one time thought by many that that struggle, with its concomitant of the survival of the fittest, meant a blind warfare between different species, or between individual members of the same species, a warfare determined mainly by brute strength or cunning, and unconditioned by moral forces, ends, or aims. This interpretation of the theory seemed to fix itself in the public mind for a time, and "Nature, red in tooth and claw," came to be regarded as a great force dominating and controlling evolution. But a deeper consideration of the theory soon brought new, or rather neglected, factors into the foreground. It soon became obvious that the interpretation of the word 'fittest' must depend on the conditions to which life has to adapt itself. As I have pointed out elsewhere:

In a community of foxes the most cunning fox would survive; in a pack of wolves the wildest and strongest wolf; while in a community of ants, those which had the least power of intelligent coöperation would be the first to become extinct. And it is equally obvious that the interpretation of the word 'selection' must vary in every grade of life, with every rise in intelligence—intelligence being, in normal circumstances, the prime factor which determines selection. Our garden roses would soon degenerate were not the selective intelligence of the gardener brought into play. Hence, intelligence, whether self-determining or brought into play from without, is obviously one of the conditions which determine fitness. But there are even higher determining conditions than intelligence, for intelligence alone may manifest itself in mere cunning. The qualities of prudence, temperance, fidelity, sympathy, coöperation, self-sacrifice for a common good—all these are amongst the determining conditions of fitness, for a people that has these qualities will always be able to hold its own against an imprudent, intemperate, unfaithful, unsympathetic, and selfish people. As Darwin himself says, "A tribe rich in moral qualities would spread and be victorious over other tribes, and thus the social and moral qualities would tend slowly to advance and be diffused throughout the world because they were the fittest to survive."¹

¹ See article on "Darwinism and Empire," *Westminster Review*, July, 1902.

All this is now commonplace to the thoughtful evolutionist, but it is necessary to emphasize it occasionally, for I submit that this consideration throws great light, not only on the methods of evolution, but on the nature of the spiritual forces which are working in and through evolution. I am not one of those who shut their eyes to the darker sides of nature, or who, burying their heads, ostrich-like, in the sands of what Viscount Morley calls a "complacent religiosity," pretend that everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. The evils which surround us, many of which seem to be bound up with life itself as we know it, are too palpable to be ignored or minimized by any clear-sighted or right-thinking mind. But, on the other hand, this upward life-tendency, which is everywhere observable in nature, cannot be ignored either. If it does not give us all the light we desire, it gives us enough to show the way we ought to go. For if nature's way is, in the long run, upward, then our way is upward too, and the lower reaches of nature, in so far as they seem to contradict or militate against this upward tendency, are to be avoided, not imitated, by us. "But we have sprung from these lower reaches!" So we have. But because the darkness of the night gradually and by imperceptible degrees gives place to its apparent opposite, the light of day, that is no reason why we should deny the light or try to adapt our sight and life to conditions of darkness. Professor Huxley's dictum, that the cosmic process is at issue with the ethical process is only half a truth, even if that, for the cosmic process *included* the ethical process, and, on the higher planes of life, both are often at one. The struggle for existence, even in the lower reaches of life, implies the observance of certain elementary rules of conduct, non-observance of which may bring death to the individual and extinction to the species or race. The teaching is clear. Natural selection means, for us, not merely the selection of the fittest in any given surroundings, it means the fittest and the best in the fittest and the best surroundings which are likely to aid

in the development of ever more perfect, or less imperfect, types of life. Nature's command is: Grow more intelligent, more justly sympathetic, more moral,—or, perish.

Neither must it be thought we are mere *products* of evolution. Such a conception would strike at the root of ethics and would leave us to watch, with folded hands, for whatever the blind gods of Fate might send. We are factors in, and not merely products of, evolution, and our moral ideals and judgments help to determine the process. Hence, the production of such an environment as will help in the evolution or development of the best and highest types of life should be the first business of the philosopher, the teacher, the legislator, the parent, the minister. It is the business of ethics to discover the conditions of such an environment, and it is the chief business of the parent, the teacher, the sociologist, and the legislator to arrange the affairs of the home, the school, society, and the state, in such a way as will conduce to its realization. In doing this several considerations naturally present themselves:

(1) If natural selection is to have fair play, to what extent should the laws of inheritance, and the laws and customs which determine the distribution of the 'unearned increment' be modified in order that all may have a fair start in the battle of life, and freedom of opportunity be given to everyone to develop the best that is within him? (2) To what extent will the forces underlying natural selection be modified by this freer, healthier, and juster environment? (3) Will natural selection be ultimately superseded by what is termed 'artificial' or intelligent selection? (It follows, of course, from what I have said above, that artificial selection is really a part of the natural, using the latter word in its widest sense.) (4) To what extent will racial developments, racial antipathies, and racial strife and competition be affected by the struggle for existence and the methods of artificial or intelligent selection to which it may give rise?

I can deal with these four considerations in only a very brief and inadequate way, as suggesting matter for discussion rather than as laying down definite conclusions.

(1) First, then, if natural selection is to have fair play, the state must see that all have a reasonably fair start in the battle of life. Few people now-a-days will contend that there is much regard for morality or ethics in our present laws of inheritance. Long ago Matthew Arnold pointed out that no civilization could endure for long which was based on such laws. That a millionaire or a multi-millionaire whose wealth has been made by very questionable means, should be allowed to tie up and bequeath this immense stock of socially produced wealth to whomsoever he pleases, without any consideration for the welfare of the society which has enabled him to accumulate his wealth, is one of those customs which, as a result of modern ethical developments, is already undergoing considerable modification. When his accumulations consist of what is really 'unearned increment,' the injustice becomes more glaring; and when those to whom he bequeaths his gains are obviously unfitted to use the enormous powers which great wealth places in their hands, the evil effects upon society are still more patent. It is artificial selection carried to an absurd and pernicious extreme, often giving undue advantages to the least desirable types of character. The millionaire is rapidly coming to be regarded not only as a social, but also as a moral monstrosity. One of the more enlightened ones has already enunciated the doctrine that no man should die rich. The new ethics, in the interest of the general good, will insist that no man should live unduly rich. It will emphasize the fact that robbery by the individual from the community is as immoral as robbery by the individual from other individuals. And it will point out that such robbery produces depraved and undesirable types in three directions,—types which become ethically diseased or depraved by the excessive luxury and power which inordinate wealth gives; other types which become para-

sitic on the former, and which help to spread throughout the community a truly loathsome spirit of subservience and servility; and a third type, which is deprived sometimes of the very necessities of physical health, and often of the opportunity for intellectual, moral, or spiritual development by the unjust usurpations of the two first named. To use an expressive phrase of Mr. Ruskin's, just as modern industrial developments exterminated the "crag-barons" of feudalism, so the higher social conscience developed by evolutionary ethics will, in time, exterminate the "bag-barons" of modern commerce and finance. As a means towards a more intelligent natural selection and survival of the most desirable types, it will urge that all unearned increment, whether of land or other forms of wealth, should be handed over to the State and used for the general good, more particularly in the endowment of childhood and the various forms of education, so that the younger members of the community may enter the struggle for existence on fair terms. As Mr. Francis Galton points out: "The best form of civilization in respect to the improvement of the race, would be one in which society was not costly; where incomes were chiefly derived from professional sources, and not much through inheritance; where every lad had a chance of showing his abilities, and, if highly gifted, was enabled to achieve a first-class education and entrance into professional life, by the liberal help of the exhibitions and scholarships which he had gained in his early youth." It would take me too far afield to attempt to forecast or discuss the great changes which such a policy would bring in the evolution of new industrial, æsthetic, and moral types. It is sufficient to say that progress has two roots,—the economic and the spiritual,—the latter including the intellectual, æsthetic, and moral relationships of men, each having its separate growths or causal series; and it is by the reciprocal action of the two that human evolution, or moral and social progress, is made not only possible, but, I think I may say, inevitable. In any case, it is

obvious that just as the evolution of ethical ideas affects social customs and institutions, so will the modification of social customs and institutions affect evolution and selection, and therefore, the types of character which evolution produces.

(2) To what extent will the principles underlying natural selection be modified by this superior environment? It is difficult and perhaps idle to attempt to forecast the types of character which this so-called artificial selection will tend to produce. Much will depend upon the ideals which mankind may have formed and which the state may strive to realize. In a society dominated by the ideals of science, the scientific character and the scientific type will be fostered. Already our educational institutions and our educational policy are being influenced, though perhaps not yet consciously influenced, by such ideals. There is not the least doubt that, in the long run, the forces which make for a superior kind of so-called artificial selection will begin to tell,—indirectly I mean. Every extra pound, taken from unearned increment which is at present spent on ‘freak dinners,’ and devoted instead to public education, is so much wealth and energy devoted to foster one type of character as against a lower and baser type. What form, in every given case, public education should take, what amount of money should be devoted to it, what particular aptitudes should be stimulated, what traits developed, what opportunities given to the superior types, and what measures should be taken for the surveillance, or even the suppression of such methods of industry and life as tend to injure or undermine the health of the individual, and through the individual, the race,—all these are questions which are full of interest to the student of ethics, questions the solution of which will have a very direct influence on the working of the principle of natural selection. The chief point, however, which I wish to emphasize is this,—that evolution, so far from promoting the survival of that individualistic type of morality which the phrase ‘the survival of the fittest’ seems to some people to imply, pro-

motes and strengthens rather the survival of those forms of life which embody the social ideal of morality. The personally upright man cannot survive, or finds it difficult to survive, in a society in which personal rectitude is of no account. Galton, I think it was, pointed out long ago how severely the best types of life suffered during the prevalence of the persecuting spirit of the later middle ages. The very phrase, 'personal morality,' cannot be adequately defined apart from a complementary conception of civic virtue,—so closely is character bound up with citizenship,—so that civic virtue is necessitated by evolution if the best types of life are to survive.

(3) Closely connected with the above is the question as to whether the methods of artificial selection will be carried so far as to take the place of natural selection. It is sometimes urged that the tendency of modern civilization, especially where it is animated by Christian ideals, is to preserve rather than to eliminate the unfit, and that the multiplication of charities, hospitals, and philanthropic institutions, tends to produce and prolong the existence of a weak, nerveless, and decadent population. The only way to avoid this, it is said, is to carry artificial selection to such an extent as to segregate or otherwise deal with the morally depraved or the physically inferior or infected types, and allow only the fit types to propagate their species. Sympathy, it is said, may be carried too far,—so far, that the multitude on whom it is expended may become a drag and an encumbrance on the nation which has to bear the added burden imposed by the presence in society of a relatively large number of weaklings and incapables who are allowed to propagate as they please. We are told by Mr. Sidney Webb that the average number of offspring amongst English intellectuals is only 1.5. In the criminal, depraved, and imbecile classes it ranges between 6 and 7 per family. Leaving the moral point on one side for a moment, it may be pointed out that the policy of segregation is already carried out to a certain extent. We segregate imbeciles, lunatics, and crim-

inals. To what extent the same policy should be adopted with regard to chronic physical and hereditary diseases is a matter of opinion, and opinion is strongly growing in this direction. Whether public opinion on this matter should crystallize into law is a question which I cannot now stop to discuss. But I may point out on the other side that society has not yet taken sufficiently active steps in the direction of eliminating disease by sanitation; the provision of a healthy environment and healthy conditions of labor; education, physical, mental, and moral; and the provision of means of pure and cleanly living, to justify it in going far in the direction of a policy for the compulsory segregation of the physically unfit. As showing what may be accomplished by a purer and healthier environment, Professor Henry Jones points out that the Poor Law Inspector of Glasgow sends every year into the country districts of Scotland numbers of little children found in the streets, "picked up selling newspapers between the knees of drunkards in public-houses." These children are "born invariably of the worst parents," but on being placed in proper homes and good surroundings they usually turn out all right. They are kept under close observation for years, and out of 630 children so sent out and brought up, only 23 turned out bad,—“a smaller proportion,” the Inspector playfully added, “than if they had been the sons of ministers or professors.”

We must also bear in mind that many persons who might, by some, have been regarded as mentally and physically unfit,—the apostle Paul, for example,—were men who reached the topmost heights of personality. Genius is often near allied to madness. We must remember also that the policy of segregation (and the more drastic policy advocated by some eugenists), if carried too far, though it might appear to promise obvious and immediate advantages, would have less obvious but none the less certain and serious dangers which would more than neutralize any advantages it might bring. The moment we begin to tamper with the roots of human sympathy,

that moment are we on a dangerous incline which might lead us to a worse than Pagan cruelty, selfishness, and slavery. We might find that the discouragement of the growth of human sympathy, leading to the segregation or the extinction of our less fortunate fellow-creatures, might so affect our civilization that its very root and basis would begin to canker and decay. And here let me say that I am not one of those who look upon charity, as it is usually understood, as one of the highest of virtues. There is a morbid, unhealthy spirit abroad which seems to take the view that self-sacrifice, as self-sacrifice, is a good thing in itself, and that it is necessary that we should have a certain number of unfortunate members of society,—the halt, the maimed, the blind, the imbecile,—for the purpose of stimulating the sympathetic virtues of charity and self-sacrifice in our fellows. Such a view of life seems to me to be morbid and unhealthy. It is “more life and fuller that we want,” and the mission of the greatest of teachers was well said to have been to give life and “to give it abundantly.” By all means let us have the superman, if we can get him without the loss of those qualities which have brought human nature to its present level from savage and barbarous beginnings. A healthy public opinion will do much towards creating, fostering, and deepening that sense of responsibility which should be felt by all who take upon themselves the duties of parenthood. How far we should go in enforcing the prior conditions of parenthood which that sense of responsibility should teach us to secure, is a question much too large for discussion in this paper, but there is no doubt that the evolutionary ethics of the future will give the question serious consideration. Already, indeed, we may all describe ourselves as moderate eugenists when the health and welfare of our own descendants are concerned.

4. The fourth question suggested by a consideration of the problems surrounding the survival of the fittest and the best, *i. e.*, the extent to which racial developments and

antipathies will be affected by the struggle for existence and by methods of artificial or intelligent selection, is one which may well appal the stoutest heart and mind when we think of the many and grave issues which are involved. A great conflict of races, the East with the West for example, is not by any means an improbable event, when we consider the result of the late war between Russia and Japan, and the racial developments which are so rapidly making their influence felt in the economic and industrial world, especially in the United States, Canada, and Australia, not to mention South Africa. There are some who speak of these racial antagonisms in a light and airy way, and say, "Let the conflict between West and East come,—the law of the survival of the fittest must prevail there as in other spheres of life." Such people do not know the strength of the forces and passions of which they speak so lightly, neither do they sufficiently consider whether a racial war would really decide all the issues, or even the chief issues involved. It is too often forgotten, that, as far as the survival of races is concerned, a war decides little or nothing. Even a conquered race may be so prolific, or may so use its natural capacities, advantages, and power of adaptability to varying conditions, as to modify the characteristics of a temporarily conquering race, or even to absorb such a conquering race altogether, as the Anglo-Saxons absorbed the Normans. It is said, for example, that when Chinese or Japanese intermarry with Europeans, the Eastern type tends to persist as against the European. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that on this point war settles nothing; while the notion of holding some five hundred millions of Eastern people permanently in subjection,—even if they could be conquered,—is surely too wild even for the wildest Jingo to entertain. As Mr. Bagehot in his "Physics and Politics" points out, in a very pregnant sentence: "Military morals can direct the axe to cut down the tree, but it knows nothing of the quiet force by which the forest grows." Hence, the moment the period of conflict is over,

all the other more permanent and persistent determining conditions of struggle and progress come into play.

What then, is the teaching of evolutionary ethics in this matter? It is surely to pay more attention to these determining conditions of survival, and to do all in our power, by conference, by conciliation, by education, by respect for national rights and national religions, and by international deputations and congresses, to bring the best thought of each civilization into sympathetic contact with that of the other, and so promote the establishment of that "paramount authority of right reason" which will make for the development of a sense of world-citizenship, and the constitutional machinery by which it may be fostered. As Darwin himself said: "As man advances in civilization, and small tribes are united into larger communities, the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instincts and sympathies to all members of the same nation, though personally unknown to him. This point being once reached, there is only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathies extending to men of all nations and races." Already a beginning has been made in this direction. This year a Universal Races' Congress will meet in London for the purpose of discussing racial, national, political, sociological, economic, and commercial questions in this spirit. And it is only by discussing our problems in this spirit that we can promote, directly within each nation itself, and indirectly by the friendly rivalry of races and nations, the survival of the best types. Just as Dante had his dream of a world-empire from the point of view of the mediæval spiritually-minded Catholic, so the modern evolutionist may have his dream, not perhaps of a world-empire, but of a world-commonwealth in which the penetrative power of ideas, and the freedom of the spirit in assimilating and propagating ideas, shall triumph over the brute conditions of struggle which have hitherto been the determining conditions of survival. New types begin in the realm of consciousness, in the dim dawn of an ever-ascending conscious-

ness, and it is to this ever-evolving and developing consciousness,—with full opportunities given to it to manifest its life at its best,—that we must look for the emergence of those higher types which this secret and mysterious realm holds within its illimitable domain.

It will be obvious, I think, from this paper, that the Darwinian theory of evolution has enriched the whole field of ethical study. It has brought new ethical problems to our notice and has shown how intimately connected the science of ethics is with evolutionary thought. Whether our individual standpoint is naturalistic or spiritualistic, we cannot but express our indebtedness to the labors of the evolutionists, and join hands together in the work of endeavoring to solve the problems which this great upheaval of thought has brought more fully and clearly into the light of day. The cause of ethical progress is a platform on which all can meet.

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CAPE TOWN.

THE ETHICS OF THE BHAGAVADGITA AND KANT.

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MUCH has been made of the apparent similarity between the ethical systems of the Bhagavadgita and Kant, the critical philosopher. To the superficial reader, the similarity is no doubt striking. Both systems preach against the rule of the senses; both are at one in holding that the moral law demands duty for duty's sake. In spite of the agreements between the two systems, however, sober second thought will disclose differences of great moment. In the present article, the writer has neither the space, nor is he competent, to make a critical study of the two systems. All that he can hope to do, is to lay bare the practical side of the Vedanta system, or, more accurately, the Bhagavadgita, and to com-